



NFL PLAYERS: HIGHER COLLEGE GRADUATION RATE THAN REST OF WORLD

While the NFL is known for developing players' football IQs, the league has also seen an unprecedented number of players who graduate from college.

The NFL's 46 percent graduation rate tops the rest of the world when it comes to earning diplomas, and the league is perfect when it comes to high school graduation. The United States has a 31 percent college graduation rate for students ages 25-34, second among all nations (Norway graduates 37 percent) according to a report released by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

The top five countries ranked by college graduation rate:

NFL/COUNTRY GRADUATION RATES

Country/League	Percent	Country/League	Percent
NFL	46%	Canada	26%
Norway	37%	Korea	26%
United States	31%		

OFFSEASON WAS GRADUATION TIME FOR MANY NFL PLAYERS

This spring, nine NFL players earned their college degrees, as players throughout the league continued the offseason NFL tradition of furthering their educations. Many of the players who earned those degrees did so through the Continuing Education Program of the NFL Player Development Department, which is headed by the NFL's Vice President of Player & Employee Development, Pro Football Hall of Famer **MIKE HAYNES**.

Denver Broncos safety **NICK FERGUSON** earned his final 15 credits with four courses (including international marketing and African-American entrepreneurship) at Georgia Tech this spring. Ferguson, who began the semester three days after the Broncos' season ended in the playoffs, fulfilled a promise to his mother.

"It's her degree as well," said Ferguson, who majored in management. "She deserves credit for everything I've accomplished. But I always wanted to do it. Just knowing I completed it, that is self-fulfillment."

New York Giants linebacker **JIM MAXWELL**, who earned a post-graduate degree, cites his post-NFL career as his impetus.

"I realize football is not going to last forever," said Maxwell, who earned his M.B.A. at Gardner-Webb University in Boiling Springs, North Carolina. "I plan on playing football for as long as I can, but I definitely want to have something to fall back on. I had started my M.B.A. at Gardner-Webb and I only had two more classes, so I definitely wanted to finish that up."

NFL Player Development was created in 1991 by NFL Commissioner **PAUL TAGLIABUE** to assist players and their families in their lives off the field. In the past five offseasons, more than 150 players have earned their degrees through the program, with at least 175 enrolling in courses each year.

"All of our research shows that players with college degrees tend to make more money during their careers, play longer, and make better decisions," says the NFL's Haynes.

Following are NFL veterans who earned their college degrees this offseason:

PLAYER	COLLEGE	MAJOR
Cleveland DB Dyshod Carter	Kansas State	Sociology
Denver S Nick Ferguson	Georgia Tech	Management
Atlanta G Kynan Forney	Hawaii	Sociology
St. Louis CB Kevin Garrett	SMU	Master of Liberal Arts
Arizona WR Bryant Johnson	Penn State	Sociology
NY Giants LB Jim Maxwell	Gardner-Webb	Master of Business Administration
Dallas LB Keith O'Neil	Northern Arizona	Liberal Studies
Baltimore LB Bart Scott	Southern Illinois	Economics
Cleveland LB Chaun Thompson	West Texas A&M	Sports & Exercise Science